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Fast food giant to move into retail park opening later in year



Work is continuing at the Banbury Gateway Retail Park, in Wildmere Road, Banbury

WORK 'WELL UNDER WAY'

WORK on the new Banbury Gateway Retail Park is "well under way" and the latest company to move in could be McDonald's.

The site, in Acorn Way, Banbury, was formerly the headquarters of motorsport company Prodrive before site owner LXB Retail Properties Plc chose contractor McLaren to build the £80m retail park.

Project manager for McLaren, John Maley, said: "We have commenced the second terrace, which is predominantly restaurants, and we're about 50 per cent through on the steel frame erection and about 10 or 15 per cent done with it overall."

He added that work was on schedule for a completion date in October, with McDonald's lining up to join confirmed retailers Marks & Spencer, Primark and Next.

The fast food chain submitted a planning application to Cherwell District Council at the end of April and will learn the council planners' decision by June 18.

A spokesman for the restaurant said: "A new McDonald's would bring investment to the area and provide at least 75 full and part-time jobs for the community."

Sophie Mogridge
news@nqo.com

"We are excited about the prospect of investing in Banbury and will be working with the council to advance our plans."

The officer in charge of the application, Lewis Bankes-Hughes, said: "A fast-food restaurant has been approved, but we are currently considering the restaurant's signage."

"That will determine whether or not it will be a McDonald's."

Mr Maley said he thought McDonald's would "probably be an added bonus" to the site.

The 258,000sq ft site on Wildmere Road has already signed Marks and Spencer for 100,000 sq ft for a full store, that would include a food section, with Primark taking 60,000 sq ft and Next committing for a 40,000 sq ft site.

Further lettings will include Fat Face, Poundland, Starbucks and Ed's Diner.

Bosses from LXB Properties and McLaren Construction expect work to be finished in time for Christmas shopping.

Principal at LXB Properties, Jon McCarthy, said: "The work is going well, we're on course for the completion date we set and Primark and some of the other shops will be having some of their shop fittings in June."

He added: "We still have a couple of units left to let but nothing is going to stop us now."

The project is being funded by the Crown Estate, which is the UK's fourth largest direct owner of regional shopping parks.

Its portfolio includes 16 schemes in places like Leicester, Nottingham, Cheshire Oaks and Newcastle.



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Heart attacks

BANBURY: Lifesaving equipment will shortly be installed in the town centre by service group the Banbury Lions. After six months of fundraising, the Lions have bought a defibrillator from national organisation the Community Heartbeat Trust.

The device is designed to be used by anyone, with or without training, and can save the lives of people going into cardiac arrest.

They are waiting for delivery of the cabinet before installing it in the Castle Quay shopping centre. Its exact location will be decided.

On Saturday, the Lions will be collecting money to help towards maintenance costs and a second defibrillator near Druckers Cafe, at the Cornmarket end of Castle Quay.

For more information visit banburylions.co.uk

Views on care

BANBURY: Patients, people who use social care services in the county, and full-time carers are invited to speak about the issues that matter to them in the health service.

Patient group Healthwatch Oxfordshire is asking the people of Banbury to share their experiences of using health and social care services in North Oxfordshire at a "Hearsay" event.

The meeting will also be attended by members of the county council and Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group.

The session takes place on June 4 between 10am and 1pm at The Mill Arts Centre.

The day is free but booking is advised. Healthwatch will also organise travel for the infirm.

To book a place, visit healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk

Volunteers

OXON: A series of fairs aimed to match potential volunteers to organisations will take place across the county next week.

Residents looking to volunteer and organisations looking for volunteers are invited to Volunteers Fair from June 2 to June 4.

A South and Vale fair will be held at the Orchard Centre in Didcot on Tuesday, June 2, between 10am and 4pm.

The Oxford Fair will take place at Town Hall on Wednesday at the same time while Bicester Fair will run on the same day between 10.30am and 2.30pm.

Thursday June 4 sees Banbury - Market Place between 9am and 5pm - and West Oxfordshire - Witney Methodist Church between 10am and 1.30pm.

Number of speeding drivers caught is down by 10 per cent

POLICE have caught fewer speeding drivers in the last year, with the number of motorists being snapped by speed cameras falling by 10 per cent.

During 2014, Thames Valley Police caught 145,264 people, down by 15,874 from the previous year - when 161,138 drivers were caught.

Figures obtained through a Freedom of Information request

also show that the force's mobile speed cameras are far more effective than static cameras.

Throughout the Thames Valley, there are 29 static speed cameras, two of which are not currently in use.

Roger Reynolds, the police officer who introduced the speed camera to the UK 23 years ago, said: "Speed cameras have not always proven an

effective method of tackling speeding offences.

"Enforcement agencies have been too strict with minor offenders in order to raise revenue and not tough enough with those who really pose a danger on the roads."

The data was collected by insurance website confused.com.

A company spokesman said: "It has been 23 years since the very

first speed camera was introduced on British roads and they remain as divisive a subject as ever. People should be keeping to speed limits regardless of whether cameras are there or not.

"A speeding fine can have repercussions, from a fine and points on your licence to a driving ban, not to mention increased insurance premiums."

County council may slash £60m off total spending

Councillors warned July's 'emergency budget' may force more cuts to services

AN EXTRA £60m of cuts could be needed at Oxfordshire County Council, bringing the amount slashed since 2010 to up to £344m.

The authority has warned an "emergency budget" - expected from the Chancellor in July - and national spending reviews later in the year are expected to present "significant financial challenges."

Finance bosses have warned senior councillors that extra savings needed over the next five years could be between £50m and £60m.

That would be on top of £284m the council has had to find since 2010 due to Government budget cuts. It is understood that job losses would be likely.

The council could also face continuing restrictions on how much council tax it can raise and has already planned to spend 85 per cent of its £130m reserves in an attempt to protect services from previously agreed cuts.

Conservative County Council leader Ian Hudspeth refused to speculate on what services in the county could be at risk, but has been warned that some might have to go altogether.

Children's centres, grant funding for community groups, homeless support, libraries and youth centres are all feared to be in the firing line.

One charity chief, Adrian Sell, said: "While recognising the pressures faced by the county council we know that investing early in a child's life saves money through reducing the need for later interventions as well as by improving parents' wellbeing and children's life



Oxfordshire County Council leader Ian Hudspeth

chances. In our view, to cut them now would be short sighted."

Mr Hudspeth said it was too early to say what cuts would be considered until the Government's plans were confirmed later this year.

He suggested that in some cases, non-essential services could be delivered in joint ventures with charities.

Mr Hudspeth also said: "We will only understand the situation fully

once the Chancellor has delivered his budget.

"In some cases we will have to look at services being delivered through mutual companies and in other ways, but we will work hard with the voluntary sector to deliver them."

"The most important thing is we keep providing services to the most vulnerable in the county who need them."

Conservative Mr Hudspeth added:

"There was a referendum on May 7 when the Conservative government was elected. The party manifesto was quite clear about budget reductions and we will have to build that in to our plans."

County council Labour leader Liz Brighthouse said: "There is already significant pressure on delivering a range of services, so how the Government thinks these new savings can be found I do not know."

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Funding is music to ears of hospice staff and patients

PATIENTS have been given a voice at a hospice in Adderbury as it secures thousands of pounds worth of funding to expand its music therapy.

Katharine House Hospice, which supports those with terminal illnesses, has pulled together £24,000 from trusts and donations.

Partnership fundraiser at the hospice Daphne Robertson said: "Music therapy sessions are a very important part of palliative care provision because giving psychosocial support to people and families is really important at the end of life.

"We have the challenge of getting funding through every year. We have had music therapy for one day a week, which went from three hours up to one day because it was just so popular. We can now have it three days a week."

The funding will cover the cost for three music therapy sessions a week for the next 12 months at the East End hospice. Music therapy allows for the hospice to continue to expand its holistic approach to end-of-life care. Other sessions held by the Adderbury hospice include beauty therapy, massage therapy, reflexology, and aromatherapy.



Katharine House Hospice

House plan scrapped

ADDERBURY: Almost 100 proposed new homes in the village have been wiped off the agenda after councillors agreed there was already enough development.

Cherwell district councillors voted against a residential development for up to 98 homes west of Banbury Road in Twyford.

They said that as a five-year land supply could already be demonstrated, there was no need for more development.

Adderbury has seen more than 180 new homes allowed since last January.

Michael Gibbard, Cherwell's planning chief, said: "We can now be more robust in only approving applications on sites which we deem suitable. Previously a shortfall in housing numbers meant we had to prioritise the provision of homes, and only refuse applications if the development would significantly outweigh this benefit."

"With a five-year land supply now in place, this pressure has been alleviated and we can assess applications using our own guidelines as opposed to those set by the Government."

"As such, we do not consider this to be a suitable site. It would not only cause significant harm to the character of the area by developing open countryside, but would result in the village losing yet another field to housing."

The prospective site was a large field of about 14 hectares. The development would have housed about 265 people and also had space for potential community facilities.

Some of the land had been reserved for a potential GP surgery, pharmacy and community centre, although this had not been formalised with an official application.

M40 crash chaos

N OXON: Motorists were delayed on Sunday after a car ended up on its side on the M40.

The collision happened on the northbound carriageway between junctions 10 and 11.

Drivers reported delays as they moved past the car at about noon.

Traffic was back to normal in the early afternoon.

Humane killings

OXON: Gun-owners are being called on to volunteer to humanely dispatch deer involved in road accidents.

Thames Valley Police (TVP) is looking for holders of firearms licences in Oxfordshire to help put animals hit by cars out of their misery.

Volunteers must have a firearms licence and shotgun certificate, as well as a DSC1 qualification.

Successful applicants will receive training from the British Deer Society on how to humanely kill the animals.

They will then be put on a call-out list, meaning they could be called upon by the force control room 24 hours a day to attend to injured deer.

Equipment will be provided and the force will pay for travel expenses.

Applications must be submitted by Sunday.

For more information visit thamesvalley.police.uk/joinus

Charity event

BANBURY: A charity auction postponed earlier this year will go ahead this summer.

Restore, in Manzil Way, was forced to postpone its fundraising event in February due to unforeseen circumstances.

But the mental health charity has said it will host its glitzy event at Banbury Cricket Club on July 24 from 6pm.

Prizes up for grabs include a trip to television chef Gordon Ramsay's London hotel and a football signed by Manchester United players.

Guests will have the chance to dance to a live Blues band and enjoy a buffet.

See restore.org.uk

'I wanted people to be made responsible for it'

Daughter of man injured in NHS care says that no-one has been held to account

Alex Wynick
awynick@nqo.com

A WOMAN, whose father was left with a head injury while being cared for in a mental health centre, won a legal battle with the NHS – but said it was not enough.

Tracy Betteridge, 43, was awarded more than £3,600 in compensation after suing the Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust.

She said: "I'm not happy at all. I wanted people, like managers, to be made responsible for it. That hasn't happened."

The case centred on her 76-year-old father Ivor, who was being treated for severe dementia at the Fienes Centre in Hightown Road, Banbury, after his wife and carer, Georgina, died aged 71 from breast cancer in 2012.

In February 2013, he was left with a head injury after a male health care assistant used a physical restraint, aiming to calm him down while nurses tried to wash him.

The agency health care assistant, who has not been named, has since

been suspended from working at the trust.

Miss Betteridge warned people needed to stand up for dementia sufferers.

She said: "If they didn't have somebody like me who stands their ground nobody would be any the wiser. My father would be just another statistic that falls off the face of the planet."

A report of the trust's investigation, published in May 2013, said it was not clear how Mr Betteridge fell, with one nurse saying she saw the assistant push him and another saying Mr Betteridge, who died in March 2014, simply stumbled after the assistant let him go.

Mr Betteridge, of Lower Brailles, was known to sometimes be violent and had a total of 10 violence incidents on his record.

The report said: "There was no care plan to manage his violence."

It also criticised the fact there were not enough staff on the ward because of sickness, with one nurse saying they were "coping, rather than caring".

The trust said it had reduced the number of patients at the Fienes Centre so nurses were not so stretched and demanded staff have the most up-to-date training in violence management and physical restraints before being allowed to work.



Tracy Betteridge with Penut the lamb



Demonstration dog Usha, who takes part in 'PAWS' workshops

Pets give autism families respite

STAFF at Banbury-based charity Dogs for the Disabled are celebrating a new study supporting their cause. Recently, with the National Autistic Society and animal behaviour experts at the University of Lincoln, the charity took part in research that supported the benefits a pet dog can bring to families with a child with an Autism Spectrum Disorder. The study, supported by the Big Lottery Fund, found that parents with a pet showed a marked decrease in stress.

Seven years for stabbing culprit

A MAN has been jailed for seven years after stabbing a man in Banbury last year.

Atique Akhtar, 21, was found guilty of causing grievous bodily harm with intent and possession of an offensive weapon by a jury after an eight-day trial at Oxford Crown Court.

The court heard he attacked a 22-year-old man with a knife at Moor Park, Banbury, on September 11, leaving him with a stomach injury.

Akhtar, of Fergusson Road, Banbury was jailed for seven years for the GBH and three years for possession of a

knife, to run concurrently. Co-defendant Umir Bashir, 22, was found not guilty of wounding with intent.

Investigating officer Pc Richard Blewitt said: "This sentence sends a clear message that violence will be dealt with robustly in Banbury. I would like to thank all the officers and staff who have worked on the investigation, as well as the Crown Prosecution Service for bringing Akhtar to justice. Finally, I would like to thank the victim for helping our investigation and for the courage they displayed during the trial."

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Have fun



New challenges

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KIDS TO GET STUCK INTO SCIENCE
NORTH OXON: Children are invited to an educational fun day, run by business students from Banbury and Bicester College. From 11am to 3pm on Saturday, June 6, at the Broughton Road campus, activities will include science shows, theatre, science arts and crafts and a bouncy castle.

HAVE A SAY WITH COUNCIL SURVEY
N OXON: People living in Cherwell have been asked to give feedback on local services in a customer satisfaction survey. The poll allows the district council to identify priorities and how it should allocate resources. The survey runs until July 10. To take part visit tinyurl.com/pven5cx

CHRISTIANS URGED TO JOIN LOBBY
OXON: Christians in the Church of England's Oxford Diocese have been invited to join a mass lobby of Parliament on the issue of climate change. Protesters plan to line the River Thames in London on June 17 to ask newly-elected MPs to prioritise tackling climate change.

MEP warns online traders will go bust unless EU acts fast on changes to VAT



Julia Bremble of online haberdashery store Sew Curvy

MOVES to overturn crippling tax changes will take too long to save many Oxfordshire traders from going out of business. That is the stark warning from a Euro MP, who has written to officials in Brussels calling for more urgency. Anneliese Dodds, Labour MEP for the South East, is among those battling new VAT regulations which cover online trading. The European Parliament will begin discussions in September but a solution is unlikely to take effect until 2017. Ms Dodds said: "For the thousands of our constituents who have written to us in desperation about these new rules, simply saying 'we will look at this in 2016' is not good enough. People are worried about their very livelihoods here." The changes, aimed at forcing

Internet giants such as Amazon to pay more tax, came into force in January. Until then, VAT was charged at the rate of the country where the supplier was based, but is now charged according to where the customer is. And anyone selling digital services including screensavers, e-books, online magazines, software or even knitting patterns must register for VAT, even if their turnover is under the UK's £81,000 threshold. Corset maker Julia Bremble revealed without the new regulations, she could have doubled the turnover of her online haberdashery store, Sew Curvy and the Oxford School of Corsetry. She said: "It's ridiculous that we have to wait until 2016 or 2017. They need to suspend these new regulations now."

Find what's on offer for children

THE options facing children who are set to complete their GCSEs will be brought together in a series of free events in Banbury. Educational organisation Activate Learning will be hosting the events to help parents learn what decisions their children will be facing. The "What next after GCSEs?" events will pull together options for higher education or future routes to employment. Events will take place at Banbury and Bicester College on Wednesday, June 24, from 6pm to 8pm. Chief executive of Activate Learning

Sally Dicketts said: "Young people have limited access to careers advice these days and parents are often expected to fill the gap. "The reality is parents feel out of their depth and may only be able to draw on their own experiences of education and work. This is not helped by the fact so much has changed in recent years, including a growing range of educational options for those aged 16 plus. The aim of these events is to ensure parents are properly informed and equipped to help their son or daughter as they start to make important decisions about their future."



Work has started on the world famous 'phone box library' outside St John's Church in South Bar Street

Permanent site for the phonebox

Work is under way on a new base for mini-library in social media storm

Hannah Somerville
hsomerville@nqo.com

WORK has now started on a permanent home for Banbury's now-famous phonebox library scheme. Last week residents spotted the appearance of fencing around a patch of ground next to the current red kiosk - opposite St John's Church in South Bar Street. Banbury town councillor Kieron Mallon said last week: "The plinth has been put in which the phone box will be placed on to. "We aren't there yet. "We are doing preparatory work for when the box arrives and then we will put it in place and paint it."

He could not confirm when the library would be complete but added that there would be a "grand opening" to celebrate its return. The original caused a social media storm in February when BT removed its shelving and books, which had been donated by an anonymous founder, citing health and safety concerns. In negotiations with the telecommunications company, Banbury Town Council refused to decommission the box's working phone, which needed to be done to keep the library, but it was agreed that a brand new box next door could house the collection of books. BT spokesman Emma Tennant said: "We're likely to be a few weeks away from the new community kiosk library being up and running."

"At the moment the base for it is still being worked on. "We'll get the kiosk to the place where it will be fitted out with its new shelving. "All the work that needs to be done to make this happen is going to plan." A local business is among those that have rallied around to help make the project a reality. Hawkins Steel Ltd, in Thorpe Way, agreed to donate shelving to the new kiosk. Director Paul Jackson said: "The original creator of the library is an old school friend of mine. "That was the initial connection. "From our point of view, we are pleased to support something that has stirred a bit of community emotion. "I was aware of the phone box for some time before it became a focal point of interest. We would like to make sure it continues."

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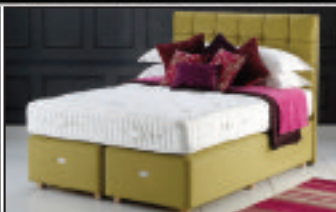
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Farms open to public for day

OXON: Farms across Oxfordshire will open their gates to the public on June 7 for the tenth annual Open Farm Sunday.

It is part of a national event, organised by LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming) and is designed to help people find out more about where their food comes from, talk to the farmers who produce it and learn about the countryside.

Events at farms range from farm walks and machinery displays, to sheep shearing and milking demonstrations. Most of the events are free.

Visiting farmsunday.org/ofs12b/visit/findfarm.eb to find out more details of specific events.

Fewer homes

OXON: Housebuilding targets are being missed in the county according to new figures.

The National Housing Federation said 1,710 homes were built in Oxfordshire between April 2014 and March 2015, a figure that was fewer than the 1,982 it said were needed.

It was part of a wider picture that saw 19 counties in the South East miss targets by a total of 19,810 homes in the same period.

The federation said a lack of housing supply was pricing many people out of owning or renting a home in their area.

Plans rejected

BANBURY: Plans to replace a garage block next to Westbeech Court, Banbury, with four new houses have been rejected by Cherwell District Council.

It was agreed that too many properties had been proposed in a small space.

Councillor Michael Gibbard, Cherwell's lead member for planning, said it would represent an "overdevelopment" of the site which would create a "poor living environment" for future residents.

The application sought to build three three-storey terraced houses and a two-storey detached home, all with private rear gardens and parking space.

Disused building is converted into flats

Derelict property was refurbished and extended as part of the district council's affordable housing plan for the area



Debbie Pickford with Art Contracts Ltd's managing directors Adrian and Jason Trinder



St Leonard's House, in Grimsbury, before work started

Hannah Somerville
hsomerville@nqo.com

AN ABANDONED building in Grimsbury has been transformed into five new apartments after a nine-month restoration project.

Last year, Banbury-based Art Contracts Ltd was appointed by the district council to renovate and extend St Leonard's House, located at the junction of West Street and Middleton Road.

The building stood empty for six years before being bought by the council.

Since its arrival onsite last year, Art Contracts Ltd has undertaken renovation, extension and cladding work to the exterior of the building.

Inside, the layout has been redesigned. A communal hallway leads to two one-bedroom and one two-bedroom apartments, while upstairs there is one one-bedroom and one two-bedroom apartments on the first floor.

Each features open-plan kitchen, living and dining space, a bathroom, bedrooms and storage.

There is a lawned front gar-

den and parking space to the rear, as well as bin storage and a raised flower bed.

Art Contracts Ltd's managing directors Adrian and Jason Trinder said: "As a family who have been local to Banbury for generations, our work at St Leonard's House also gave us an element of personal self-satisfaction knowing we have made a positive contribution to the area.

"We are delighted to have been involved in bringing such a prominent, historic building back into use and hope it will continue to offer homes in the heart of Grimsbury for decades to come."

The homes are being marketed as part of Cherwell District Council's Build! project, which aims to provide affordable housing.

Debbie Pickford, Cherwell's housing chief, said: "It's amazing the difference this renovation has made not just to the building, but to the whole area.

"This site has been completely transformed from somewhere that people would look away from and ignore, to a place that people stop and admire."

For more information, call 01295 221501 or visit cherwell.gov.uk/build

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Abandoned furniture costed £250 to remove

FLYTIPPERS who dumped a wooden chest of drawers and a stool on a grass verge have cost Cherwell District Council £250 in clean-up costs.

On Friday, the council received reports on social media of items dumped at Nethercote Lane.

Officers visited the site within hours.

It is estimated that the cost of clearing the rubbish and investigating the flytip is in the region of £250.

Debbie Pickford, Cherwell's new clean and green chief, said: "We think it is wrong that innocent taxpayers have to foot the bill for the selfish

actions of others so are appealing for help to trace those who are responsible so the costs can be directed back at those who deserve it."

An investigation is now under way to trace the culprits who, if caught, could face a conviction for flytipping.

If convicted, offenders can receive a maximum sentence of five years in prison, a £90,000 fine plus clean-up costs.

Officers are appealing for the public to provide any information which could identify those responsible. Anyone with information should call 01295 227007.

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Windfall for 79-year-old

STAFF were overjoyed at a Banbury Halifax branch when a local pensioner received a shock £100,000 from the bank's nationwide prize draw.

Charles Everett, 79, has been a customer at the Castle Quay branch for 16 years and was given a special presentation of the mammoth cheque.

Staff member Liz Jeffs said: "He was absolutely shocked. Staff were in tears. They also presented him with champagne and chocolates. It was a really lovely day for them."

"£100,000 is a life-changing amount. It's lovely to be able to reward our customers."

Each month, Halifax customers with sufficient money in their accounts are entered automatically into the prize draw. One hundred prizes of £1,000 are given away, 10 prizes of £1,000 and just three of the top cash prize of £100,000.

Mr Everett, from Brackley, had received a letter informing him that he had been entered into the draw. He was then invited into the branch and spoke with bank manager Camille Gabay.

He said: "The last time I came into money was £20 to £30 in Premium Bonds."

"I came and sat down and she checked my details, and told me: 'You've won £100,000'. I went numb."

He and wife Denise intend to use their winnings responsibly. He said: "We just need to sit down and think about it."

Restoration apartments go on show for buyers

Former Connexions offices are highly desirable after conversion and extension

Hannah Somerville
hsomerville@nqo.com

A FORMER office and 1900s building, which has been converted into apartments, will be put on show this Saturday after a nine-month restoration project.

The former Connexions office in Broughton Road, Banbury, was closed in 2011 as part of a countywide shutdown of the careers advice service.

Renovations and an extension to the building were taken on last July by a Milton Keynes property firm. The building now features four stylish apartments, three with one bedroom and one with two bedrooms.

Each home comes with its own entrance hall and bathroom, with a mixture of open plan and separate living, dining and kitchen space. There is also a communal garden with bike storage.

An open house event at 10am on Saturday will give people interested in buying one of the

properties the chance to look around and speak to members of the council's Build! team about the project.

John Donaldson, Cherwell District Council's housing chief, said: "Nine months on from arriving on site, our contractors are now putting the finishing touches to this project, having transformed it from a forgotten building into four beautiful new homes. These apartments will offer purchasers a rare opportunity to benefit from all of the character features of an early 1900s period building, but with the benefit of modern energy efficiency measures including loft and wall insulation."

Prices for the new homes are still to be confirmed but are likely to cost between £140,000 and £170,000.

Priority will be given to people who currently live, work or have family connections within Cherwell, and want to live in the properties as their own homes.

Mr Donaldson added: "We have already received a high level of interest from people who are not only taken with the building, but its enviable location."

Pre-booking for the viewing day is essential. Visit cherwell.gov.uk/build or call 01295 221501 to make an appointment.



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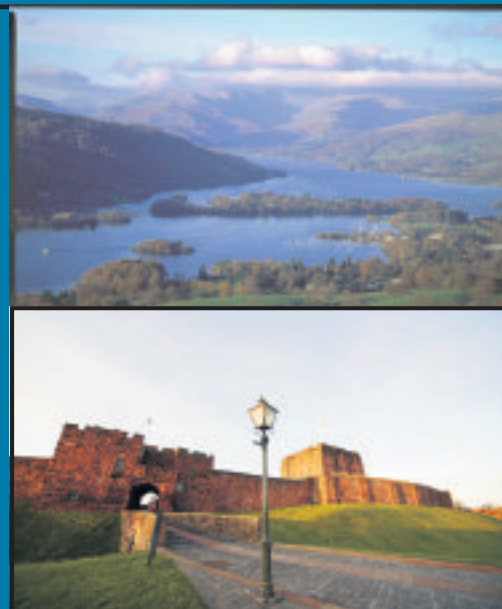
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Back-to-basics romcom is all about getting out there

MAN UP (15, 88 mins)

A comedy/romance/action film, starring Lake Bell, Simon Pegg, Rory Kinnear, Ophelia Lovibond, Olivia Williams, Stephen Campbell-Moore, Ken Stott, Harriet Walter, Sharon Horgan. Director: Ben Palmer.

The romantic comedy goes back to basics in *Man Up*, a sweet, funny and charming tale of boy-meets-wrong-girl-but-doesn't-realise-it, filmed on location in London.

Directed at a brisk pace by Ben Palmer, who helmed *The Inbetweeners Movie*, this contrived tale of mistaken identity strips away most of the gross-out interludes that have become de rigueur for the genre.

New York City-born writer and actress Lake Bell sports a flawless English accent as the hapless heroine, who bumbles and dithers in a Bridget Jones stylee minus the incessant self-doubt and criticism.

She sparks a lively on-screen partnership with Simon Pegg, so we root for their unlikely lovebirds to overcome the various obstacles that screenwriter Tess Morris flings in their path.

These include Rory Kinnear as a lecherous old school mate, who threatens to tell tales out of class about Bell's protagonist unless she provides him with impromptu sexual favours.

It's the closest Morris comes to peddling gratuitous muckiness.

The film opens with thirty-something singleton Nancy

(Bell) trying to convince herself to "be more deviant... engage with life".

She retreats from a party full of potential suitors to spend the evening alone in a hotel room.

"Put yourself out there," suggests her happily partnered sister, Elaine (Sharon Horgan). "Cook more, understand the Israeli Palestine conflict..."

On a train to London, Nancy meets a girl called Jessica (Ophelia Lovibond), who is meeting a blind date under the station clock at Waterloo station.

Jessica will recognise her beau because they will both be holding copies of the bestselling self-help book *Six Billion People And You*, which is full of inspiring aphorisms including, "Your negative thoughts are ruining your life and everyone else."

When the train pulls into the station, Nancy discovers Jessica has left her copy behind and races after her; only to cross paths with the blind date, Jack (Simon Pegg), under the clock.

On the spur of the moment, Nancy decides to pose as Jessica and see where the meeting leads.

Surprisingly, she gets on well with Jack but there are skeletons in both of their closets they would prefer to keep hidden including his icy ex-wife (Olivia Williams) and her new partner (Stephen Campbell-Moore).

Man Up is an unappealing title for a feel-good romp that relies heavily on the leads to carry the film through its occasional lulls.



A scene from the film *Man Up*, showing: Jack, played by Simon Pegg, and Nancy, played by Lake Bell

Picture: PA Photo/Studio Canal/Giles Keyte

Screenwriter Morris doesn't overcomplicate her narrative, juxtaposing Nancy and Jack's eventful first date with preparations for the 40th anniversary party of her parents (Ken Stott, Harriet Walter), who know all about the ups and downs of married life.

Kinnear sinks his pearly whites into his intentionally garish supporting role with unrestrained vim.

Dialogue is peppered with polished one-liners and Palmer sustains momentum until a suitably grand finale that proves you can't hurry love, even with GPS tracking.

Cake Bookworm

At The Water's Edge by Sara Gruen is published in hardback by Two Roads, priced £17.99 (ebook £6.99).

AFTER publicly shaming themselves on New Year's Eve in 1944, Maddie and Ellis Hyde are cut off financially by Ellis' father. To win back his favour, the couple flee from Philadelphia to the Scottish highlands in the midst of the raging war where Ellis attempts to hunt the Loch Ness monster, a task previously failed by his father. We follow Maddie's unexpected transformation as she struggles to redefine herself; virtually abandoned by her fame-hungry husband in a foreign land. Sara Gruen, the American author of *Water For Elephants*, masterfully depicts the significance of class politics and unlikely female friendships in a war-torn environment. This is a genuinely beautiful novel and an enthralling love story, which simply cannot be put down.

The Cellar by Minette Walters is published in hardback by Hammer, priced £12.99 (ebook £8.64).

MINETTE Walters takes us into the dark and chilling world of child abduction, imprisonment and slavery in her latest novel. Muna's earliest memories are of a children's home, until the day a stranger appeared claiming to be her aunt. From that day forward her life would change, forever. Kept as a slave by the Songoli family, Muna is restricted in all parts of her life, not given access to education and treated with no respect, especially late at night by Mr Songoli. The story is told through Muna's eyes. When the Songoli's son goes missing, a chain of events occur that see the downtrodden, ill-treated Muna finally turn the tables on her captors. Walters' sometimes graphic prose left me feeling uneasy, but the story moves at a quick enough pace to make this an enjoyable read.

Mrs Engels by Gavin McCrea is published in hardback by Scribe, priced £14.99 (ebook £5.69).

IT'S 1870 Victorian England and millworker Lizzie Burns is London-bound from Manchester with her lover, the celebrated theorist, Frederick Engels. Lizzie's new home is a million miles from the cotton mills and although she appears to adapt to these new surroundings, this arrangement doesn't always meet with the approval of the London elite. It is fascinating to learn about the hugely influential figures of Frederick Engels and Karl Marx through the eyes of the witty, feisty and incredibly likeable character of Lizzie. She provides a shrewd, proletarian's eye view of socialist society and their never-ending discussions and debates. Based on a true story, McCrea captures time and place so eloquently and Lizzie's determination and facetiousness inhabits every single page of this novel.



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New chairman chosen after a council reshuffle

Former mayor promises to improve help for young people out of employment

Naomi Herring
nherring@nqo.com

HELPING jobseekers will be one of the top priorities for the new Cherwell District Council chairman after a reshuffle.

The shake-up will see Melanie Magee, a former mayor of Bicester, take on the role as chairman for the coming year. Her vice chairman will be Chris Heath.

Mrs Magee said: "During my year as chairman, I will focus on helping job seekers and in particular, young unemployed people."

She also announced her chosen charity for the year was SeeSaw, which provides grief support for young people across the county.

Members of the revised executive committee remain the same, although four members have switched roles.

Barry Wood will continue as leader for Cherwell District Council and his deputy councillor George Reynolds will also remain in the same post.

Mr Wood will be responsible for overseeing the eco-town and gar-

den city including the 1,900 homes to be built at Graven Hill. He will also be responsible for policy, partnerships and communications within the district council.

Leisure, car parks, customer service and Banbury Museum will come under Mr Reynolds' post.

Also remaining in the same executive roles are Ken Attack as lead member for financial management, Norman Bolster as lead for estates and economy including buildings owned by the council, Michael Gibbard the lead member for planning and Nicholas Turner lead member for joint working, as well as change management and IT.

Four councillors will be swapping roles including Tony Iloft taking on lead member for public protection. This covers safeguarding and licensing such as public and environmental health, licensing for premises and vehicles and food hygiene.

Debbie Pickford will cover environmental services such as waste, recycling and energy in her role as lead member for clean and green and John Donaldson taking over as lead member for housing.

Now in its fifth year, the Brighter Futures in Banbury partnership programme now comes under councillor Kieron Mallon as its lead member.



Melanie Magee, the new chairman of Cherwell District Council

Summer boat safety warning

BOATERS in the county have been warned to stay aware of the risks of carbon monoxide poisoning this summer.

Oxfordshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service said 30 boaters have died after being poisoned by the gas in the past 20 years.

A further 30 have died in boat fires. The warning comes ahead of national Boat Safety Week, which runs until Sunday.

Carbon monoxide poisoning occurs when fuels such as gas, oil, coal or wood do not burn fully.

When the fire burns in an enclosed space the oxygen is gradually used up and replaced by carbon dioxide.

When inhaled, it causes a chemical reaction meaning the blood is no longer able to carry oxygen, which can lead to death.

The fire and rescue service has warned people using boats to make vital safety checks and follow the engine operating guidelines.

Boaters are also advised to fit smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors.

During Boat Safety Week firefighters will talk to boat owners in Banbury and will hand out leaflets about the risks of carbon monoxide poisoning and how to guard against it.

Fire and rescue service home, road and community safety manager David Heycock said: "Smoke alarms can make a real difference to the outcome of fires on boats."

"We want all boat users to be aware of the risks and want to see suitable smoke alarms installed in all boats with overnight accommodation."

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Oxfordshire Listings

Events

TODAY (WEDNESDAY)

Earth Trust, Little Wittenham: Woodland adventure expedition for five-eight year olds, where they can use their detective skills to discover the trust's site and explore, build and play. Also on Friday. No need to book. 10am. £4 donation per child, accompanying adult(s) free. 01865 407792.

Didcot Railway Centre, Didcot Parkway station: Half term steam day. From 10.30am. Enjoy rides in vintage coaches behind Great Western steam locomotives and visit the locomotive displays, plus museum and interactive learning centre. £10 adults, £8 children. 01235 817200.

Open gardens: Upper Chalford Farm, between Sydenham and Postcombe as part of National Garden Scheme. It includes a Jacobean farmhouse garden, hidden gardens, pond and stream, treehouse. Wheelchair access. There will be a plant sale. 5-8pm only. Adults £4, children free. 01844 351320.

Cheney Over 50s Club: Mike Paine will give a talk on the story of a very special stained glass window at the Community Hall, Cheney Lane, Headington: for 2.30pm.

Ramblers walk, Tiddington: Five-mile circular walk with pub stop at end, meeting at the village hall car park in Oxford Road, ref SP649051. 10am. 01865 772529.

Artweeks exhibition: Organised by members of West Ox Arts at their gallery in Market Square, Bampton, as part of the Oxfordshire Artweeks Festival. Work for sale will include paintings, prints, sculptures and ceramics. Exhibition runs until Sunday. Free admission. Gallery hours are 10.30am-4.30pm Tuesday to Saturday and 2-4pm on Sunday. See westoxarts.com

Zippo's Circus: Featuring musical clowns, beautiful horses and human-pyramid acrobats, at South Park, off Morrell Avenue, Oxford. Until Monday. Times, prices and tickets (from £7) at zippos.co.uk

Ramblers walk, Shabbington: Leisurely five-mile walk from The Old Fisherman pub in Thame to Ickford followed by a pub supper. Sorry, no dogs allowed. 6pm. 07707 183113.

Talk on journalism: Freelance feature writer Lucy Atkins and travel journalist Fleur Kinson will examine how producing work for newspapers and magazines differs from other kinds of writing and how one might earn a living from this kind of writing at Blackwell's Bookshop, 48-51 Broad Street, Oxford. 7pm. Entry £3.

THURSDAY

Roman archaeology day: Families are invited to come to Abingdon Museum in Market Place and meet members of the Trendles archaeology project, joining in the fun activities inspired by what it has found while digging at Marcham. Work on craft projects, play a Roman game or identify artefacts. Children of all ages welcome but must be accompanied by an adult. From 10.30am. Free. 01235 523703.

Nature day: Have a go at pond dipping or bug hunting, or try the nature quiz or get creative with some natural art and clay creatures, at Cuttle Brook Nature Reserve, Southern Road, Thame.

Picnicking starts at 12.30pm, with activities from 1pm-3.30pm. Event is free, thanks to funding from the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment (TOE2). Free parking (up to 2hrs) by the Scout Hut off Southern Road.;

FRIDAY

Vaira Vike-Freiberga: The former president of Latvia (1999-2007), will talk about her life and career at Leonard Wolfson Auditorium, Wolfson College, Linton Road, Oxford. 5.30pm. Free.

Open garden: Old Swan and Minster Lovell Mill, Minster Lovell, will be open as part of the National Gardens Scheme. It is set in 65 acres of picturesque gardens, located beside the River Windrush, with flower meadows. 2pm. Wheelchair access. There will be homemade teas. Adults £3, children free. 01993 774441.

SATURDAY

Craft and gift market: Town Hall, High Street, Thame. Leather and wooden goods, jewellery, handbags, jams and chutneys. 10am. Free entry.

Guided walk: Meadow Farm wildflower meadows, Thame Road, Piddington, with staff. 10am. £4 per adult suggested donation. Booking is essential at bbowl.org.uk/whats-on (search Meadow Farm). 01869 245864.

Antique and collectors market: Methodist Church, Oxford Road, Kidlington. 10am. Free admission. 01865 371494.

Art exhibition: Annual display by members of Bicester Art Club, held at Bicester Methodist Church in Bell Lane. From 10am. Free admission. Refreshments available.

1940s weekend: Upton House and gardens, near Banbury, brings history to life with wartime music, costumes, traditions, displays by the Home Guard and Land Girls. Saturday and Sunday. Normal admission charges apply. 01295 670266.

Beer festival: A great range of real ales and ciders at Chadlington Memorial Hall, Chapel Road, plus live bands and entertainment for the children. The beer festival is the chief fundraiser for the Friends of Chadlington School. From noon. Entry £10 includes beer tokens. See chadlingtonbeerfestival.com

Summer craft fair: First fair at the Windmill Centre, Hempton Road, Deddington. About 20 stalls. 2pm. Free entry and parking. 01295550284.

Book launch: Ian Wheeler launches his detailed and illustrated history of *Fair Mile Hospital: A Victorian Asylum*, at The Cholsey Pavilion, Station Road. There will be an exhibition of photographs and artefacts from Fair Mile and books will be on sale, signed by the author. 2.30pm. Free entry. 01491 652295.

Fieldpaths walk: Meet the Buckland village car park, ref. SU344980, for an 11-mile walk via Newbridge with a historical mystery. Bring refreshments and a picnic lunch or you can have a pub lunch at Newbridge. Dogs on leads please. 10am. Contact: David Godfrey 01865 514082.

Circular ramble: Bicester and Kidlington Ramblers is organising a 12-mile walk along the Evenlode Valley through Wychwood Forest to Finstock and Fawler. Returning through Cornbury park. Meet at Spendlove Centre car park in

To get an event of any kind listed here, enter the details into our easy-to-use online database at thisisoxfordshire.co.uk/events

Please add your event no later than ten days before the day of publication.

Charlbury, ref. SP357196. 10am. Bring a picnic lunch. Dogs on leads, please. Contact: Mary Gugh 07939 826412.

SUNDAY

Open garden: Church Farm Field, Church Lane, Epwell, near Banbury, which has more than 90 trees will be open at 2pm. Homemade teas. Adults £2, children free. 01295 788473. It is open as part of the National Garden Scheme, as are the following three venues. Lime Close, 35 Henleys Lane, Drayton. Three-acre mature plantsman's garden with rare trees, shrubs, perennials, mixed borders, and a herb garden. There will be a plant sale and homemade teas. Wheelchair access. Adult £4.50, children free. 07831 86 463. Wayside, 82 Banbury Road, Kidlington. One-quarter acre garden shaded by mature trees with mixed borders and large fern house. There will be plant sales and homemade teas. 2pm. Adults £3, children free. 01865 460180. Whitehill Farm, Widford, near Burford. Two acres of hillside gardens and woodland with spectacular views overlooking Burford and Windrush Valley. There will be plant sales and homemade teas. 2pm. Adults £3.50, children free. 01993 823218.

Open gardens: There will be 11 very different gardens open in Horspath village in aid of St Giles Church funds. 2pm. There will be teas and a plant stall. £5. 01865 872793.

MONDAY

Festival of Nature: Join local wildlife trust BBOWT for two weeks of wildlife activities across Oxfordshire. Visit oxfordfestivalofnature.org for details.

TUESDAY

Bug hotel making: Drop in to Bury Knowle Park, London Road, Oxford, any time between 11am and 3pm to help add another wildlife friendly feature to this award-winning park. The activity is part of the Festival of Nature.

Abingdon Flower Club: Will stage demonstrations by leading arrangers at Northcourt Centre, Northcourt Road, Abingdon. There will be a raffle, sales table and refreshments. 7pm. £7.50 for visitors, annual membership is £35.

Natural history talk: David Wilding will discuss the creation of the RSPB Otmoor nature reserve - where he is site manager - in *From Wheat to Wetlands* at Old Schoolroom, St Peters Church, First Turn, Wolvercote. 7.45pm. £2.

Music

WEDNESDAY

Cello recital: Shirley Smart, whose influences from range from classical, jazz and the Middle East, will be playing at Warneford Chapel, Warneford Lane, Headington. 7pm. Recommended donation £5. 01865 484777.

THURSDAY

Organ recital: Daniel Hyde plays the

complete organ works by JS Bach at Merton College Chapel, Merton Street, Oxford. 1.10pm. Free.

Community singing evening: As part of the Finstock Village Music Festival, Kath Lucas is running a two-hour singing session in the village hall. Come along whatever your familiarity with group singing may be. 8pm. Free, but a £2 donation would be appreciated.

FRIDAY

Adam Barnes: The rising folk star will be playing the Cafe Bar at Cornerstone Arts Centre in Didcot. 8pm. Free.

Folk night and ceilidh: DellyWellyBoot Band and Finstock Festival Band will be performing at the event at Finstock Village Hall. Doors 7.30pm, music from 8pm. Tickets £5 from wegottickets.com/event/311563 or on the door if available.

Organ recital: Dr Emma Gibbins, director of music at Newport Cathedral, who was educated at St Helen and St Katherine, Abingdon, will be playing *Grand March* from *Aida*, Handel's *Largo* and *Finlandia* by Sibelius at St Mary Magdalene Church, Barrow Road, Shippn, near Abingdon. 7.30pm. Free. There will be wine and fruit juice available after the recital.

SATURDAY

Eliza Carthy and Tim Eriksen: The traditional folk duo will be at Chipping Norton Theatre. The voices, from either side of the Atlantic, sing songs from each of their traditions with passion and energy. 7.45pm. £16. 01608 642350.

Botley Singers: Spring concert with a selection of familiar songs at Botley Baptist Church, Westminster Way, Oxford. 7.30pm. Free entry with retiring collection. 01865 242189.

Jackie Oates: There will be a party atmosphere as the former finalist in the BBC Radio 2 Young Folk Awards, together with her band, will be the last to play Finstock Village Hall before its redevelopment. Oates is on tour following the release of her new album *The Spyglass and the Herringbone*. Doors 7pm, music from 7.30pm. Tickets £12 from wegottickets.com/event/311507

SUNDAY

Fairport Convention: The group hailed as the originators of British folk-rock music will perform at Cornerstone Arts Centre, Didcot, combining classics from the their repertoire as well as new songs. 8pm. £21, concessions £19. 01235 515144.

Theatre

TODAY (WEDNESDAY)

Bicester Choral and Operatic Society: Join BCOS for one Gilbert and Sullivan's greatest hits, *Iolanthe*, which satirises the political structure in the UK and remains surprisingly relevant 130 years after it was penned. With great songs and fantastic humour. Until Saturday Adults £13, children £7. 07596 759653.

THURSDAY

Scaramouche Jones: One-man play at the Club Room, Corn Exchange, Wallingford about an aged circus clown who prepares to meet his destiny and recounts the heart-breaking story of his life. beautiful. 8pm. Until Saturday. £10. Unfortunately this small upstairs venue is unsuitable for access by people with mobility difficulties. 01491 825000.

FRIDAY

Family comedy show: POP! at Chipping Norton Theatre. With his faithful teddy bear, deckchair and basket of tricks, Christian Lee is set for a lovely day at the seaside - until the day takes a turn and things don't quite work out as planned. 11.30am. £8.50. 01608 642350.

SATURDAY

Great War tale: Writer/performer Simon Waterfield, of Historical Interpretation, presents *The Kilted Tommy*, about his grandfather Harry Kay and he explains why thousands of Englishmen fought in kilts in the First World War. Upstairs at Turl Street Kitchen, 16 Turl Street, Oxford. 6.30pm. Tickets £8.50 and £6.50 from boxofficediva.com or on the door. 07748 803257.

Dance

SATURDAY

Charity show: Oxfordshire urban dance company Raw Diva present a show at Arney Theatre, Abingdon School, Park Road, in aid of BlueSkye Thinking, a charity, set up in memory of Abingdon boy Skye Hall, which supports child brain tumour research. 7.30pm. See rawdiva.co.uk/tickets for details. £15/£12. 01235 849063.

Comedy

THURSDAY

New Road Baptist Church, Bonn Square, Oxford: Comedy connoisseurs Mullins and Gladwin cordially invite you to *Comedy A La Carte* and dine on a smorgasbord of bite-size sketches, featuring a fruity selection of characters to tickle the marrow of your funny bone. 8pm. Also Friday and Saturday. £7 and concessions £6 from wegottickets.com/mullinsandgladwin

FRIDAY

Katherine Ryan: The comedian who is fast becoming a recognisable face on British TV with appearances on BBC's *Live At The Apollo*, *Mock the Week*, *QI*, will be at Mill Arts Centre, Banbury, as part of her second UK stand-up tour, *Glam Role Model*. Suitable for ages 14 and over. 8pm. £15.50

Shappi Khorsandi: At Chipping Norton Theatre. The comedian is back on tour, as she celebrates her haphazard zigzag towards her dreams in her new show *Because I'm Shappi*. 7.45pm. £15, concessions £13. 01608 642350.

SATURDAY

Mark Grist & MC Mixy: Bring their show *Dead Poet's Death Match*, where poets from the past take part in mythical battles against each other, to Cornerstone Arts Centre, Didcot. For ages 16 and over. 8pm. £15, concessions £13.50. 01235 515144.

Glee Club, Hythe Bridge Street, Oxford: Four comics from the top of the UK and international comedy circuit. 7.15pm. £14.50. 0871 472 0400.

CakeSport

banburycake.co.uk/sport



Mike Ford has been appointed as Banbury United's new manager

Ford gets the Banbury job

Ex-Oxford skipper takes over at Puritans

MIKE Ford is relishing a return to management with Banbury United after spending more than a year out of the game, writes Jack Johnson.

The Puritans interviewed candidates on Thursday and Ford, who was axed as Oxford City boss at the end of the 2013-14 season, decided to accept the position.

Banbury, who were relegated from the Evo-Stik Southern League Premier Division this season, advertised the job last week with then-manager Paul Davis saying he would not

Evo-Stik Southern League

reapply for the position.

Ford, who won promotion to Conference North with City, feels the time is right to return.

"I am very excited by it – the club has got a lot of potential," he said.

"The vibe I am getting is that it is a brand new start and an opportunity to move forward."

He continued: "It has been a good break."

"The only time I missed being involved was around Christmas because it is

football time.

"Towards the end of the season, I thought: 'I have been out of it long enough and I want a challenge'."

"I'm looking forward to getting started and making a difference."

Banbury will join Didcot Town, North Leigh and Wantage Town in Southern League Division 1 South & West next season and Ford accepts it may take time to turn the club around.

He added: "The supporters need to show patience because I have looked at the stats and Banbury have fallen away somewhat."

It's three on the spin for pacesetters

BANBURY continued their winning run with a seven-wicket victory at Harefield in Serious Cricket Home Counties Premier League Division 1 on Saturday.

Seamer Ollie Wright and all-rounder Richard West led the way as Banbury dismissed the hosts for 118 on the way to their third win, which keeps them joint top with fellow 100-per-cent sides Henley and High Wycombe.

Wright took three early wickets, including that of opener Simon Macey for 34, as Harefield, who were inserted on losing the toss, slumped to 38-4.

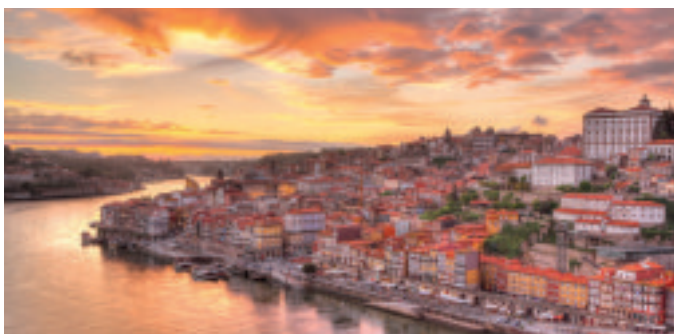
Off-spinner West captured 4-16 in 5.3 overs – two victims being caught by keeper Tim Paine – as their last four wickets fell for 19.

Wright finished with an impressive 3-18 from his 10 overs.

Hugo Darby made a composed 37, while West completed a memorable match with an unbeaten 32 from 51 balls as Banbury passed the target in the 27th over.

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ARIES

Mar 21-Apr 19

There are some really exciting aspects to your chart this week, which can help you to succeed where before you have failed. Don't try to do more than you can or should in your work as attention to detail is everything. Someone you used to admire is about to fall from their pedestal! You'll be surprised who it is too. Ring now so I can tell you more about your exciting future.

0906 585 4360

TAURUS

Apr 20-May 20

Something you were about to give up on starts to show signs of success and you no longer feel the need to fit in with others, but have the confidence to make your own plans. Emotions work overtime on Friday when you need to be careful not to believe everything you hear. Act on what you see only and not what you hear. Ring now to find out why this is such an exciting year ahead.

0906 585 4361

GEMINI

May 21-Jun 20

It's time to put your own needs and desires to the fore Gemini, as you've been making sacrifices for others for far too long now. What you thought to be a promise in business could have been merely a suggestion, so have a back up plan if you want your week to go as you planned. Doing what needs to be done yourself should be your first choice. Ring now to hear what is occurring above.

0906 585 4362

CANCER

Jun 21-Jul 22

You're feeling emotionally vulnerable at the moment and you're not sure who you can trust and who will let you down. You need to start thinking about what you need and desire from your future as far too long now you've been dancing to the tune of others. News of a birth or pregnancy is sure to bring surprise. Ring now to hear how Neptune tells you what others have tried to keep secret.

0906 585 4363

LEO

Jul 23-Aug 22

Your ruling planet the Sun helps you to work out what you need in life and so, from Tuesday onwards, you start to get rid of all that is not working for you. I know you're tired of waiting for someone to give you an answer but be patient, as by Friday they start to find their confidence and voice again. Ring me now to hear why this is a great week for new job interviews.

0906 585 4364

VIRGO

Aug 23-Sep 22

This is a week in which you should work hard and ensure you look good. You've been stuck in the middle of a drama which is about to come to an end and by listening to your own advice and instincts you will soon see with clarity what needs to be done. New faces in work link to your future in more ways than you could possibly imagine. Ring now for your future in full.

0906 585 4365

LIBRA

Sep 23-Oct 22

It would seem that compromise is the only answer to a problem you are currently stuck in the middle of. The person or persons concerned seem to feel as passionately as you do. A relationship issue is offered a solution by someone who you didn't think was on your side, but who is about to prove they're your new best friend. Ring now to hear how Mars offers you financial opportunity.

0906 585 4366

SCORPIO

Oct 23-Nov 21

Old contacts prove lucky for new business deals and you start to see possibilities for your future which, this time last year, were not even crossing your mind. I'm proud of how far you've come and even though you've learnt some hard lessons you've come out of it with aplomb. Give me a ring now to hear why this is the year you finally feel like you again.

0906 585 4367

SAGITTARIUS

Nov 22-Dec 21

Take your time in financial dealings and don't be pushed into what doesn't suit you. Emotionally, you're vulnerable and in danger of making decisions which are not in your long term interest. A younger person wants to say sorry, but doesn't know how. Give them a green light so that they know they can avoid embarrassment. Ring now. I have so much more to tell you.

0906 585 4368

CAPRICORN

Dec 22-Jan 19

There is an opportunity for you to become more independent in your career and if this is what you want then you must grab it with both hands. You have spent far too long doing what looks right to others rather than what feels right to you. Gemini link to a better financial future, so seek them out and find out why they're written in your stars. Call me now so I can show you how great your future is.

0906 585 4369

AQUARIUS

Jan 20-Feb 18

I know you're scared of the future but I also know you're going to love it when you see it. Time spent going over paperwork, even if you have to pay for a professional's opinion, will save you a small fortune in the long run. Research and study see you ending this week on a high as you cross over into a better area financially and professionally by the fourth. Ring now for more details.

0906 585 4370

PISCES

Feb 19-Mar 20

I love your sense of humour, but not everyone gets it do they Pisces? The problem is, you are trying to laugh your way out of something serious that you should be dealing with sensibly. Last minute offers this week prove exciting and can open up a whole new world of friendships and relationships. Ring now for more on this very opportune time. Last month. Ring now for the full story.

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MOTORS

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PROPERTY

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CakeMotoring

banburycake.co.uk/cars

In brief

- A PEUGEOT 208 has just set a new long-distance fuel economy record, travelling 1,337.19 miles using 43 litres of fuel; an amazing return of 141.2mpg. The firm's efforts were completed using a "strictly standard" example of its most efficient 208, which features a 1.6-litre diesel engine with 99bhp and official economy of 94.2mpg. The record was verified by the French Type Approval Authority, UTAC (Union Technique de l'Automobile, du motocycle et du Cycle).
- SITTING in the middle seat has long been considered as pulling the short straw; siblings and family members pin you in on both sides, you're robbed of a window seat and there's limited leg room. However, new research conducted by Skoda shows that being a middle seat child may well set you up for success in later life, particularly in business. The study of over 1,000 Brits with two or more siblings shows that 90% of people in 'director' level positions sat in the middle, while nearly three quarters (72%) of business owners and over three fifths (62%) of senior managers also found themselves between siblings when on the road.

Silence is really good for the Soul

Auto facts

Model: Kia Soul EV
Price: £29,995
Insurance group: 19
Top speed: 90mph
Length: 414cm/163in
Width: 180cm/31.5in
Luggage capacity: 9.9 cu ft
Acceleration 0-60mph: 10.8 seconds
AC normal charge: 230V/10A/10-13 hours
With 6.6kW EV equipment: 230V/6.6kW/within 4.5 hours
DC fast charge with 50kW EV equipment: 360V/45kW/33 minutes
Warranty: Seven years/100,000 miles

By David Duffy
david.duffy@nqo.com

SHHHH! Kia has built a car that is almost too quiet for its own good.

So silent is the electrically-powered version of the Soul that the Korean car maker has fitted it with a low-speed sound system to warn pedestrians and cyclists as it whispers stealthily down city streets.

For drivers, the main concern with any electric car is not how quiet it is but the number of miles it can cover, and Kia is making some bold assertions for its lithium-ion polymer batteries – most importantly a claimed range of 132 miles.

Having said that, after I fully charged the Soul's battery pack, the dashboard read-out steadfastly refused to register a range of more than 88 miles.

What is clear is that the regenerative braking system, which tops up the batteries when coasting or slowing down, plays a real part in extending the range, as one day's running around proved.

A trip of more than 50 miles involving runs from Witney to Oxford, then Carterton, Kidlington and back to Witney, left the car registering more than 30 miles in the "tank".

That is impressive and the smooth, fashionable, five-seat



The electrically-powered Kia Soul EV

Soul EV is the first pure electric car I have driven that has not induced an attack of so-called range anxiety.

Helping to squeeze out the miles is an air conditioning system which can be set to heat or cool only one side of the car when the driver is travelling alone; super-low-rolling-resistance tyres and extra aerodynamic features beneath the car, where the 274kg battery system is housed.

The remainder of the electric drive components are mounted beneath the bonnet, where the engine would normally be located.

Because an electric motor requires less cooling than a petrol

engine, the front of the Soul EV has been blanked off where the radiator grille would normally be found, also bringing aerodynamic benefits. The charging ports are hidden behind a panel in this blanked-off section.

Owners have the option of recharging the batteries through a standard domestic socket, via the Kia-branded wallbox supplied as standard, or through a public fast charger.

It is surprisingly quick off the mark, tackles steep hills with ease and its 90mph potential top speed allows it to cruise happily at motorway speeds.

It comes in a range of bright colours so you should see it coming – even if you can't hear it.

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Silverstone Classic

Event is a celebration of iconic cars

THREE of Britain's best-loved and iconic TR sports cars will be celebrating major milestones at this summer's 25th anniversary Silverstone Classic (July 24-26).

It is 60 years since the TR3 was born, 50 years since TR4A was introduced and 40 years since the launch of the TR7 – all three significant birthdays will be marked with massive displays, plus a memorable circuit parade.

The TR Register – in partnership with the TR Drivers Club and Triumph Sports Six Club – has teamed up with the event organiser to ensure a huge turnout and more than 100 models are expected to join in the festivities.

When released in 1955, the Triumph TR3 was a considerable progression from the previous TR2. Most notably, perhaps, it was the first British series production car to feature disc brakes.

Ten years later, the Triumph TR4A was introduced, again showcasing significant steps forward in sports car engineering, with its independent rear suspension and revised styling, to fit the requirements for indicator repeaters in the vital American market.

A full range of all three fabled TRs will be on show for the public to savour at the Classic, alongside key variants from the legendary

marque's successful racing and rallying programmes.

The undoubted highlight of the weekend's birthday celebrations, though, will be the special parade staged on the full Silverstone Grand Prix circuit. This is scheduled for Saturday evening shortly before chart toppers Status Quo take to the main stage.

General admittance tickets give access to all pits, paddock, infield displays as well as trackside grandstands and the majority of the family entertainment, including funfair rides and the live music concerts.

Full ticket details at silverstoneclassic.com.

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